

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
**WORK & LEARNING**

# National Institute for Work and Learning

2022 Annual Report



JANUARY 2022 – DECEMBER 2022

## MEET OUR LEADERSHIP



**Lisa Johnson**  
*Director*  
National Institute  
for Work and  
Learning



**Pamela Carter**  
*Director*  
Research and  
Evaluation



**Amanda McMahon**  
*Director*  
College and Career  
Readiness



**Caitlin Dawkins**  
*Director*  
Justice and  
Workforce  
Programs

# NIWL by the numbers

21 active projects in 2022

66 Number of resources and tools created

86 Number of sites we work in

16 Number of new grants won



125



Number of articles, blogs, events, talks, profiles, published or given by NIWL

230 project partners convened

22 New partners engaged



16 NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDERS

636

Number of hours of technical assistance given

For NIWL it was another remarkable year for the new and continuing work that our funders and partners invited us to do with them. They recognize NIWL's excellence in college and career readiness, research and evaluation, and workforce development as well as the importance of engaging practiced implementers for global corporate philanthropic initiatives. In a year when the pandemic was slowing, labor markets were tightening, and inflation was eroding programming dollars, NIWL onboarded 10 new staff, enabling us to offer more services in more disciplines. We added team members in data analytics, STEM programming, youth development, and program management.

With this growing team, we support youth and adults in returning to their communities after incarceration. We provide college and career readiness preparation for teens in under resourced communities. We develop employees into engaged and impactful community leaders. We measure and evaluate Tribal initiatives to gauge the benefits of their social programming. NIWL co-designs strategies to expand the teacher and paraprofessional workforce in rural, Native-serving schools. We plan and implement a K-12 Women in STEM Manufacturing and Design (STEM<sup>2</sup> D) program to inspire women and girls to pursue STEM education and careers. We work with employers to sponsor apprenticeships to develop their internal talent while giving young adults essential skills and a foot on the ladder.

Each of our projects is grounded in our commitment to increase equity, promote social justice, and expand access and opportunity among people living in marginalized communities. We work with everyone — from foundations to faith-based organizations, schools and colleges, volunteers, private sector businesses, federal, state and local governments, Native American communities, to get this done.

## OUR WORK

### Research and Evaluation

*Curious minds make  
awesome discoveries*



8

Number of  
evaluation  
projects

1

Number of  
research  
projects

4

Number of  
new partners

2

Partners  
returning

#### TYPES OF PARTNERS

University  
Tribal Nation/organization  
State Regional Education Association

**NIWL applies rigorous processes to our varied evaluation approaches to include outcomes-based and participatory evaluation as well as process and impact evaluation.**

Our current research and evaluation services guide workforce, justice, and education partners in effectively documenting program implementation progress as well as measuring the effectiveness and impact of their programs and policies.

During 2022, the Research and Evaluation team managed over twenty projects with our clients representing several Tribal Nations, the federal government, a state regional education association, a university, along with corporate and other non-profit organizations. To serve these diverse clients, we ensure a flexible and collaborative approach that reflects the needs and values of each community we serve. We evaluate and measure what is meaningful to them and utilize approaches that best apply to each context.

In 2022 we added new staff bringing additional talent to the team, allowing us to provide data dashboards and increased quantitative analysis for our clients. Examples of the work range from short-term secondary analysis to multi-year grants.

During 2022, we provided evaluation services for a multi-year federal grant that provides services to students in Pennsylvania to improve graduation and college entrance outcomes. This is a second grant with this client and the relationship is strong and collaborative. It is with this project that we provide continuous data feedback to the client and practitioners through data dashboards. Additionally, we provide the client with several smaller research briefs on specific program implementation best practices to include activities to increase math grades and graduation rates, to improve social emotional learning skills and to provide multiple opportunities to explore college choices.

## OUR WORK

### Justice and Workforce Programs



**Brian Castro** is an apprentice at SBSCS (formerly South Bay Community Services) a community-based nonprofit organization providing a comprehensive range of services for children, youth, and families in San Diego county, built around the idea that an open, accessible organization can best serve its community. In describing YDPA, Brian believes the experience is

**“Organized, motivating, and worthwhile. I can now express myself, open up, and communicate with youth and colleagues a lot easier. It has been a magnificent experience.”**

 **15** Number of sites we work in

**10** apprentices trained with **5** employers



76% Percent of participants gaining employment

**2% reincarceration rate**

**1,147**

Number of young adults served through justice reentry programming.

**38** 

Number of project partners convened

**NIWL uses a people-centered approach to workforce development as we work to reduce barriers to participation in the labor market,** such as lack of access to training, employment-related collateral consequences of criminal justice involvement, and lack of access to supportive resources necessary for stability.

For example, NIWL leads the Compass Rose Collaborative (CRC), a project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor to improve the education and employment outcomes of emerging adults, ages 18 through 24, after involvement in the U.S. criminal justice system. The CRC works with community partners with high poverty and crime rates to provide holistic, culturally relevant workforce development that goes beyond job placement and training. Through deep mentorship connections provided by people with lived experience, the CRC program helps young people not only find meaningful work but achieve personal goals such as getting their own apartments, purchasing cars, and renewing family connections.

In 2022, NIWL's workforce team added new capabilities and offerings to expand opportunities for workers and learners, including the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program, designed to open the field of youth development to people with valuable lived experience who may lack access to other formal training. In 2022, NIWL trained 10 young people to enter the field of youth development.

Additionally, NIWL won the first iteration of the U.S. Department of Labor's Growth Opportunity Grant, which provides workforce development training, mentoring, and placement for young people impacted by the justice system who live in areas struck by community violence. NIWL began the process of implementing this grant with three returning partners and two new partners in Kailua, HI and Richmond, VA. NIWL staff also served on the steering committee for the National Reentry Workforce Collaborative and presented at its inaugural conference in Bethesda, MD.

1. The Compass Rose Collaborative is 100% funded by the Department of Labor in the amount of \$4.5M. No other sources of funding support this program.



## OUR WORK

# College and Career Readiness

*“Even greater than the wealth of professional development opportunities, **being a part of Pathway to Success has given me nothing short of a second family.** Through our many workshops and events, I have managed to develop close friendships and **connection with my peers and mentors alike.**”*

### Miracle Moore

World languages and linguistics student Pathway to Success program



18

Number of implementing sites

3

New sites added in 2022

776

Number of students served

365

Females served

1,565

Students indirectly served

410

J&J volunteers participating

4,603

Volunteer hours contributed

64

Number of tools, guides, videos, activities, eModules created

### Unfortunately, many youth in underserved communities lack adequate preparation for the 21st century job market.

The NIWL College and Career Readiness (CCR) team develops and implements programming and resources for young people as they prepare for future education and career pathways. Since 2016, NIWL has partnered with Johnson & Johnson on its [WISTEM<sup>2</sup>D](#) initiative to inspire and support girls and women in their pursuit of STEM studies and careers. Last year, we reached over 11,700 girls and young people (age 5 to 18) through our online quizzes and hands-on activities focused on science, technology, engineering, math, manufacturing, and design. In 2022, NIWL's expanded its partnership programming to include women pursuing STEM<sup>2</sup>D disciplines in higher education.

In partnership and our collective leadership, Johnson & Johnson's [Bridge to Employment](#) and its expansion pilot program [Pathway to Success](#), which supports first generation college students, have achieved great results. Statistically significant differences were observed between BTE participants and comparison groups in career awareness, knowledge of higher education opportunities, plans to pursue higher education, and readiness skills. From the first Pathways cohort, nearly 75% graduated from college within four years and have successfully transitioned to full-time work or graduate school, compared with 27% of first-generation college students nationally.

Following lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, NIWL met workers and learners where they were in 2022, releasing 64 cutting-edge online college and career readiness tools, and providing 24 remote professional development opportunities. Our learning management system and resource hub arm educators with the tools they need to effectively support youth and improve college and career readiness. NIWL is changing the way youth and navigators develop the technical and essential skills they need to succeed and thrive in college and the workforce.

Find more of CCR's resources [HERE](#).

# People, Planning, and Partnerships

**People.** In September 2022 we had a high energy and joyous reunion — and first meeting for some on our NIWL team — as travel resumed post pandemic.



## PLANNING

The individuals and communities we serve include those from historically underserved communities, who may be impacted by poverty, displaced from education or the workforce, involved with the justice system, or experience systemic and institutional inequities. By collaborating with these communities to devise responses to their needs and priorities we advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in work and learning.

In 2022 NIWL completed a strategic planning exercise to take us through 2025. We formed a staff led team that identified four issues facing our communities, and four priorities for NIWL to act upon to address them.

ISSUE	PRIORITY
Work and learning programs and interventions must be nimble and adaptable to support the evolving needs of employers and communities.	<b>Support community partners.</b> We will enhance our capacity to support community partners to work within and across work and learning contexts to respond to individual and community needs.
Work and learning institutions, and the intermediaries who support them, operate within entrenched power structures that often fail to respond to the needs to historically underserved communities.	<b>Elevate community voices.</b> We will share power to work with and for community members in true collaboration.
The limitations of funding models that specify program models or strategies may be too rigid to allow for flexible, community-driven solutions.	<b>Influence the field.</b> We will advocate on behalf of community-driven development to broaden its application in the work and learning fields.
The landscape of work and learning is constantly evolving, and recent events have upended the ways people live, work, and learn. Advancing responsive solutions requires NIWL's visionary leadership.	<b>Grow with intention.</b> We will validate our most effective ideas to lead the industry in responsive solutions and expand our portfolio.

## PARTNERSHIPS

NIWL would like to thank our 2022 funders and collaborators.



A large fashion and footwear company

